

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Michael Chertoff
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Chertoff:

We request a full explanation of the Department's grant funding allocation decisions for the Fiscal Year 2006 round of Homeland Security Grant Programs for Massachusetts. We recognize that most of these programs suffered funding cuts in 2006 as compared to what was provided in 2005. Nevertheless, we are particularly concerned about the severe cut in funding for Massachusetts' share of Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grants, which was reduced by approximately 30 percent, more than double the 14 percent cut in the total funding allocated to the UASI program in 2006.

According to the Fiscal Year 2005 DHS Homeland Security Grant Program Guidelines and Application kit¹, the UASI program "provides financial assistance to address the unique planning, equipment, training, and exercise needs of high risk urban areas, and to assist them in building an enhanced and sustainable capacity to prevent, respond to, and recover from threats or acts of terrorism." Clearly, Massachusetts is a high-risk urban area: We need not remind you that two of the planes involved in the 9/11 attacks took off from Logan airport, some of the 9/11 terrorists spent time residing in Massachusetts prior to the attacks, and at least one of the Millennium bombers entered the U.S. after being smuggled to Boston on a liquefied natural gas (LNG) tanker. Moreover, Boston and the surrounding areas are home to critical infrastructure, including a busy strategic port, and the only LNG importation terminal sited in an urban area.

We quite simply do not understand how a region of the country with such a high population density and considerable critical infrastructure that has also been targeted by terrorists would receive such a disproportionate cut to a vital homeland security program. We request a detailed written explanation of how DHS arrived at its funding allocation decisions for Massachusetts' share of these programs. If you have any questions or concerns, please have your staff contact Mark Bayer or Michal Freedhoff at 202-225-2836 in Rep. Markey's office.

Sincerely,


Edward Markey


Barney Frank

¹ <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/docs/fy05hsgp.pdf>

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June 6, 2006
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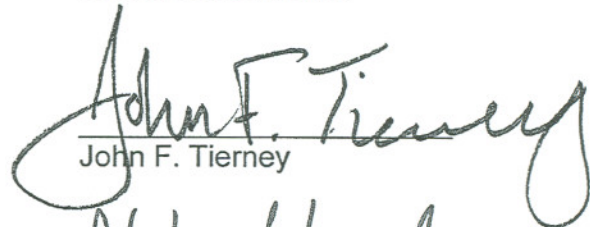

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